

AGOG OVER GOG AND MAGOG

(Charleston Gazette - July 23, 2009)

(Free Inquiry magazine - Aug-Sept 2009)

(syndicated nationally by Knight-Ridder-Tribune)

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Incredibly, President George W. Bush told French President Jacques Chirac in early 2003 that Iraq must be invaded to thwart Gog and Magog, the Bible's satanic agents of the Apocalypse.

Honest. This isn't a joke. The president of the United States, in a top-secret phone call to a major European ally, asked for French troops to join American soldiers in attacking Iraq as a mission from God.

Now out of office, Chirac recounts that the American leader appealed to their "common faith" (Christianity) and told him: "Gog and Magog are at work in the Middle East.... The biblical prophecies are being fulfilled.... This confrontation is willed by God, who wants to use this conflict to erase his people's enemies before a New Age begins."

This bizarre -- seemingly deranged -- episode happened while the White House was assembling its "coalition of the willing" to unleash the Iraq invasion. Chirac says he was boggled by Bush's call, and "wondered how someone could be so superficial and fanatical in their beliefs."

After the 2003 call, the puzzled French leader didn't comply with Bush's request. Instead, his staff asked Thomas Romer, a theologian at the University of Lausanne, to analyze the weird appeal. Dr. Romer explained that the Old Testament book of Ezekiel contains two chapters (38 and 39) in which God rages against Gog and Magog, sinister and mysterious forces menacing Israel. Jehovah vows to smite them savagely, to "turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws," and slaughter them ruthlessly. In the New Testament, the mystical book of Revelation envisions Gog and Magog gathering nations for battle, "and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."

In 2007, Dr. Romer recounted Bush's strange behavior in Lausanne University's review, *Allez Savoir*. A French-language Swiss newspaper, *Le Matin Dimanche*, printed a sarcastic account titled: "When President George W. Bush saw the prophesies of the Bible coming to pass." France's *La Liberte* likewise spoofed it under the headline, "A small scoop on Bush, Chirac, God, Gog and Magog." But other news media missed the amazing report.

Subsequently, ex-President Chirac confirmed the nutty event in a long interview with French journalist Jean-Claude Maurice, who tells the tale in his new

book, *Si Vous le Répétez, Je Démentirai* (If You Repeat it, I Will Deny), released in March by the publisher Plon.

Oddly, mainstream media are ignoring this alarming revelation that Bush may have been half-cracked when he started his Iraq war. My own paper, *The Charleston Gazette* in West Virginia, is the only U.S. newspaper to report it, so far. Canada's *Toronto Star* recounted the story, calling it a "stranger-than-fiction disclosure... which suggests that apocalyptic fervor may have held sway within the walls of the White House." Fortunately, on-line commentary sites are spreading the news, filling the press void.

The French revelation jibes with other known aspects of Bush's renowned evangelical certitude. For example, a few months after his phone call to Chirac, Bush attended a 2003 summit in Egypt. The Palestinian foreign minister later said the American president told him he was "on a mission from God" to defeat Iraq. At that time, the White House called this claim "absurd."

Recently, *GQ* magazine revealed that former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld attached warlike Bible verses and Iraq battle photos to war reports he hand-delivered to Bush. One declared: "Put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground."

It's awkward to say openly, but now-departed President Bush is a religious crackpot, an ex-drunk of small intellect who "got saved." He never should have been entrusted with power to start wars.

For six years, Americans really haven't known why he launched the unnecessary Iraq attack. Official pretexts turned out to be baseless. Iraq had no weapons of mass destruction, after all, and wasn't in league with terrorists, as the White House alleged. Collapse of his asserted reasons led to speculation about hidden motives: Was the invasion loosed to gain control of Iraq's oil -- or to protect Israel -- or to complete Bush's father's old vendetta against the late dictator Saddam Hussein? Nobody ever found an answer.

Now, added to the other suspicions, comes the goofy possibility that arcane, supernatural Bible prophecies were a factor. This casts an ominous pall over the needless war that has killed more than 4,000 young Americans and cost U.S. taxpayers perhaps \$1 trillion.

Allez Savoir - September 2007

Le Matin Dimanche - Sept. 9, 2007

La Liberte - Sept. 17, 2007

Si Vous le Répétez, Je Démentirai - March 2009, Plon publisher

Charleston Gazette - May 28, 2009

Toronto Star - May 29, 2009
(now on thousands of Web sites)